



THE COMMITTEE TO PRESERVE THE UPPER WEST SIDE

**Testimony of LANDMARK WEST!
Certificate of Appropriateness Committee
Before the Landmarks Preservation Commission
160 Central Park West aka 2 West 76th Street
May 5, 2020**

LANDMARK WEST! is a not-for-profit community organization committed to the preservation of the architectural heritage of the Upper West Side.

The Certificate of Appropriateness Committee wishes to comment on 160 Central Park West, aka 2 West 76th Street, an English Gothic style church building designed by William Appleton Potter and built in 1897-1898 from within the Central Park West – West 76th Street Historic District. The application is to alter the areaway and install a barrier-free access ramp.

FULL DISCLOSURE, LANDMARK WEST is, and has been in a long term relationship with the Fourth Universalist Society for some time now. Most recently as fiscal sponsors for a much anticipated slate roof, and formerly in partnership with the Community through S.O.U.L., “Save Our Universalist Landmark” uniting neighbors, congregants and church leadership in 1985, during the nascent days of LANDMARK WEST! itself.

The 4th U landmark served as witness on January 12, (and 13th) 1988, when the Landmarks Commission brought the party to the Upper West Side for a legendary nearly 15-hour hearing that began at 10:30am on the 12th and adjourned at 1:17am the next day. It continues to serve an integral role in our own history. With this in mind:

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee supports accessibility to our landmarks in order to make them available to all New Yorkers. The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee was surprised by this unexpected, but inventive proposal. Reincorporating donor tissue from the same host—an autograft is often the best match. That said, the Committee questioned origins, is the ambo stone the work of William Appleton Potter or part of the Louis Comfort Tiffany altar? Is the stone finish similar to the façade or might the carved quatrefoils weather differently when outside?

Further questions remain about the dimensions—could this incline rise ideally be achieved in one continuous run parallel the façade without the initial threshold which runs perpendicular?

Lastly, concerning the sidewalk vaults—while we are very protective of these, the new application seems to be an unorthodox integration and unlikely to provide much light if any to those below. This might be better served as weeping limestone capstone.

Ultimately, the proposed changes do not compete with the underlying structure and do not obscure any defining features. The Society has a long-running history of thinking differently, and doing right by the community—whether their immediate neighbors or the City at large, and this ramp will allow them to serve both more readily.

The LANDMARK WEST! Certificate of Appropriateness Committee supports approval of this application.